

REMARKS

This application contains claims 1-104. Claims 9-30, 39-61, 69-88 and 99-104 were withdrawn in response to a restriction requirement. Claims 2, 3, 32, 33, 62, 63, 90 and 91 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 4, 31, 34, 64, 89 and 92 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 31, 62 and 89 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Hira (U.S. Patent 5,381,392) in view of Fyan (U.S. Patent 5,513,260), and claims 2, 32, 63 and 90 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Hira in view of Fyan and further in view of Udagawa (U.S. Patent 5,706,261). While disagreeing with the grounds of rejection, Applicant seeks to expedite issuance of a patent on the subject matter deemed by the Examiner to be allowable, and has therefore amended claims 1, 31 and 89 to incorporate such allowable subject matter and has canceled claims 2, 32, 62, 63 and 90. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute the subject matter of the original claims in a continuation application.

Claims 3-8, 64-68 and 91-98 were objected to for depending from rejected independent claims, but were deemed to recite patentable subject matter. Applicant has therefore amended claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of canceled claims 2 and 3 and has amended claim 89 to incorporate the limitations of canceled claims 90 and 91. In addition, Applicant has amended claims 4, 64 and 92 to stand as independent claims, respectively incorporating the limitations of original claims 1, 62 and 89, from which these claims previously depended. Claims 5-8 depend from claim 4; claims 65-68 depend from claim 64; and claims 93-96 depend from claim 92. Thus, claims 1, 4-8, 64-68, 89 and 92-96 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned objection, claim 97 is an independent claim, which is similar in subject matter to the combination of claims 89 and 91 (which was found to be allowable). Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the objection to claim 97 and to claim 98, which depends from claim 97, should be withdrawn. These claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 33-38, which are pending in this application, were neither rejected nor objected to, apparently due to an oversight. These claims are similar in substance to claims 3-8, which were deemed to contain allowable subject matter. Therefore, Applicant has amended independent claim 31 to incorporate the limitations of canceled claims 32 and 33, and has also amended claim 34 to stand as an independent claim, incorporating the limitations of original claim 1. Claims 31 and 34 are thus believed to be in condition for allowance, as are claims 35-38, which depend from claim 34.

Applicant believes the amendments and remarks presented hereinabove to be fully responsive to all of the objections and grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner. In view of these amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in the present application are in order for allowance. Notice to this effect is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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